

DREAM VISIT OF THE COUNTESS TOLSTOI TO AMERICA

American Millionaires Sought Countess Like Foreign Noblemen Pursuing an Heiress From the United States

By COUNTESS VERA TOLSTOI
(Daughter of Count Leo Tolstol.)

IT was a wonderful warm and quiet summer morning when I arrived on the ocean steamer in the harbor of New York. The Statue of Liberty with its uplifted hand and burning torch was the first thing I saw of this great and glorious country. It spoke to me of the free and uplifted spirit of a great nation. Freedom was always the ideal of my life and coming from a most oppressed country I felt as happy as a child at beholding her smiling mother from a distance. I wept secretly.

The ship came nearer to the city and I saw the high thirty-story skyscrapers glittering in the morning sun. Those gigantic nests of an alert and busy nation excited my mind, and my heart began to beat faster and my thoughts to surge more quickly than before. They spoke to me of a strong and prosperous population, and I felt that my hands would be much stronger than ever before, and that all my pockets would be full of laughing American money. It made me happy to think of it.

The ship stopped and I landed on American soil.

I FELT as my feet were the wings of a bird. The first Americans I met were the newspaper reporters. They surrounded me with their curious questioning faces, and my heart trembled. These public critics and judges of the great American nation made the deepest impression on my mind. Their eyes spoke to me of powerful progress and prevalent individualism by this people. I thought they would probably interview me, and indeed they did so. That would never be done in Russia or Europe. To interview a lady—never! It would be ridiculous there. In Europe a newspaper man always remains in his office writing the newspaper. They are not accustomed to this kind of reporting, and write only theories, theories, theories.

"Are you a Russian Countess?" one of them asked me.

"Yes."

"What do you think of America?"

"Oh, it is a great, free, prosperous and rapidly progressing country," I answered without hesitation. Tears stopped my conversation, and the reporters noticed every emotion. I felt a little ashamed.

"Are you married?"

"No," I answered very stoutly.

"But," I thought to myself, "I would like to be married here." I laughed at my foolishness.

"Where are you going to stay while here?"

"In the best of your hotels. Which is the best in New York?" I asked one of the lady reporters. She advised me, and I was soon settled and very happy. But I could not sleep. I wished to think over my journey to this great and free country and how I should next act.

Sought American Croesens.

As a countess from a most prominent and aristocratic family, well educated and pretty, my idea was to marry a rich American millionaire, and interest him, as my husband, in helping to free Russia and make it a republic like America.



marry a rich American millionaire, and interest him, as my husband, in helping to free Russia and make it a republic like America. According to my scheme, five million rubles, or two and a half million dollars, would suffice to defeat Czarism in Russia and make it free. What would this sum mean for a wealthy American millionaire? Nothing at all, thought I to myself. I would try to turn the head of some one, and when I was the wife of a man worth ten million dollars, it would be nothing for him to sacrifice two and a half for a great political end. The problem was only to meet the proper man.

I thought I would immediately make a list of all the wealthy unmarried men in America. I had heard in Russia the names of a few millionaires like Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Gould, but of so many others I had no idea. But there was a double point in my plan. Would an American millionaire marry a Russian countess? And how could I become acquainted with them? Oh, such foolishness. * * * But life is foolishness. A peasant to the city in-

millionaire, but I said: "I came to America to study the psychology of the wealthy American men, and to write stories in my native land about their great idealism and spirit." That made the reporters laugh, and one of them asked if I would not like to be married in America? I think I became red at this question. At this moment he drew a picture of my face. I felt terribly over this mistake, and was sure that the reporters would notice it and speak in the papers of my reddened cheeks.

The reporters went away and I was in my room. But soon the servant rushed to tell me that a large crowd of visitors was expecting me downstairs. She gave me probably fifty visiting cards, and I began to investigate them, one after another, to see if among them there was the name of a well-known millionaire. None at all. Ah, at last.

Three last cards made me fairly weep with joy. They were of gold, with jeweled letters. They were the cards of John D. Rockefeller, Howard Gould, and Mr. Corey, the Steel trust president. My body trembled at



habitant is foolish; to an American a Russian is an idiot, and to a Russian an American is a crank and a crazy fellow. The world is a madhouse, so why should I worry over my foolishness?

I closed my eyes, but excited, half anxious, and soon slept. At 10 o'clock in the morning I was awakened by the ringing of my telephone bell. I was informed that twenty reporters were down stairs calling on me and that I ought to make an appointment to meet them. The chambermaid brought me the newspapers, and my picture was on the first page, as also my whole interview. The Americans are such great individualists that they like to read personalities in their newspapers, regardless of whom they may be about. They write and read all kinds of love and murder stories in their papers. They put in them the pictures of every sensational person, a thing which would never happen in our country.

Liked Americanism.

I liked this Americanism, and thought that these interviews would be the best means of making me acquainted with the millionaires. Soon I was dressed, and the reporters surprised me with a thousand and one questions. They asked the aim of my trip to America. I dared not say that I came to marry an American

this great surprise, and I danced like a little child from joy. I soon looked at myself in the glass, made my toilet as impressive and attractive as I could, and used some perfumes on my dress. Then I asked the servant to first call Mr. Rockefeller, for he was richest of all. I went downstairs trembling and excited, for the freedom of a hundred and fifty millions of our people was depending on this moment, and on the impression which I would make.

Her First Encounter.

I went from the stairs back to my room again to think over what I should say and how to present the proposition of my marriage. But I did not know whether those millionaires were married or not. That, at least, I ought to know.

I rang the bell and the servant entered. "Do you know, my dear, whether those three men are married or not?" I asked the chambermaid, showing the cards. She stared at me with sneering expression on her face and answered: "They are all married men. They have wonderful and charming wives, who are also good to their servants."

This was terrible news which I had not expected to hear. I became as white as paper. The chambermaid left the room and I began to weep, as one who just sure of his

prey, had lost all in a moment. I forgot the visitors and the millionaires, and thoughtfully and sadly, leaned on the table. I was in such excitement and despair as I never had been before in my life. I thought that if everything was so to fall and if there were no more unmarried millionaires in America, I must kill myself. I had a good little pistol and some bombs in my baggage, and these would provide the way.

I was just stretching my hand out for the bombs, when a beam of ideas flew through my head. I remembered that the men in America, especially the millionaires, divorce and marry many times. "Their feelings are easily affected and I might soon change their mind and their love. Very well, it might be possible that some one of them would divorce his wife and marry me. I at least would try. I dried my tears and went down stairs. Mr. Rockefeller met me very frankly and cordially, a special gift of all the Americans, which is lacking in the badly educated Europeans. He was dressed very simply.

Meeting With Rockefeller.

"Countess, are you interested in baptism and churches?" the richest man in the world asked me. He offered me a Bible.

"The churches," I said, "have for centuries enslaved humanity and will

COUNTESS VERA TOLSTOI,
Who Came in Quest of an American Millionaire Husband.

enclave them. I love freedom and the education of all the oppressed millions in the world. But what means baptism? I do not know it at all."

He began to talk to me about the Baptist Church and all the glory of his tremendous wealth disappeared. I seemed not to impress him at all. I soon became tired of him, and he much more of me. I bade him goodbye, and asked then to call Mr. Gould.

A young man with a handsome face entered and smilingly stretched out his hand. "Have you been to our theaters and seen New York?" asked the rich Croesus of the new world.

"No, I do not like the theaters now and am not much interested in the beauty of New York. I have a great political and noble mission to this country. Are you not interested in the fate of the poor and the suffering? Would you not help me to free my native land?"

But he only laughed at that.

I was just asking the servant to call Mr. Corey when a young American lady entered. She said that she was wondering at the intimate talks with gentlemen, and asked me about my aims in America.

"I must confess to you that my idea was to be married to some of these millionaires, to get a great deal of money, and then to free our people," I assured her.

Shamed by American Girl.

She looked at me earnestly, stretching out her hand. "No, dear Countess, a brave woman in our country would not do that. The individual is, in this country, as high as the community, and a lady in America would not sacrifice herself for the benefit of the community. Your act is socialistic and wrong in denying individualism. Not only the community, but likewise the individual, ought to be regarded in cases like yours. There can be no community without individuals. You must not sacrifice yourself for your country by seeking the marriage of a rich man. That is equivalent to robbing a person and spending the money to help the suffering."

self-development. The men are still a century behind our women in morality, but they are strong and active. Business is the God of Heaven of an American man, not money, as many have stated. The American millionaire is not chained to his money, but he is chained to his business. And an American woman does not adore the money, but the business abilities of her husband. That is a mistake, indeed. We will, hereafter, adore the character and the morality of a man and in the course of a half century our Rockefeller, Goulds and others will be the greatest men in the world."

I bowed my head before such truth and asked the servant, who entered, what she wished.

Enter First Millionaire.

"Countess, here are two gentlemen asking to see you. There are their cards."

My interesting visitor rose to go and asked the gentlemen to enter. I did not look at their cards, for the beautiful words of the American girl were sounding in my ears. The two gentlemen were a rich millionaire and a parson.

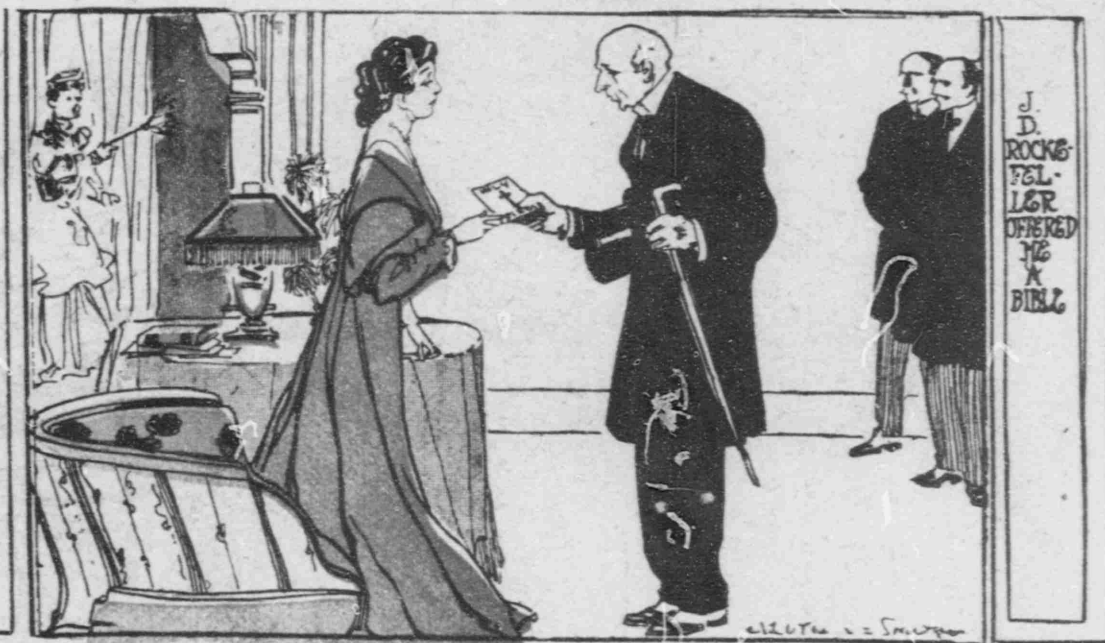
"I came," said the millionaire, "to marry you and have brought a minister who will make the marriage legal. I have read in the newspapers that you have come to this country to marry a millionaire. I am a millionaire. I was married, but I easily obtained a divorce through my great wealth, can you marry me now?"

Afraid of these vehement words of the American millionaire, I trembled like a leaf. I felt that something terrible was about to happen. I sat down. For a few moments I was silent, when the servant again entered and declared that another gentleman was very anxious to see me. I was greatly excited and hardly knew what to say, but I told the maid to have him enter. It was another rich American.

"What is it? What do you wish?" I asked, a little confused.

"I read in the newspapers that you would like to marry a millionaire while here. I am a millionaire and my attorney will come soon and inform you that I am sure of a divorce from my wife, and that I would be happy to make you a proposal of marriage. I think you understand me?"

"I am already divorced and came before you to marry the countess and you must not interfere with me," said the first millionaire maliciously to the other, who seemed a little surprised. He replied quietly as he would if talk-



MONSTER DIAMOND FOR KING

ON the occasion of his birthday, King Edward VII received what would readily be regarded as a present fit for a sovereign.

The Cullinan diamond, the largest stone of its kind yet discovered, and enormously larger than even the greatest diamond previously hailed as the premier gem, was presented to the British monarch by the government of the Transvaal, not only on account of the loyal love it is supposed to have for the King of Great Britain, but also in recognition of the granting of constitutional privileges to the South African colony.

Nearly every one of the historic diamonds of the world has its legend, and, perhaps, if one were wanting it soon would be supplied. With the Cullinan diamond this romance is characteristic of the century in which it was found. There is no weird story of robbery, but it has its romance. The diamond was found in the Premier diamond mine, on January 23, 1905, by an old miner, returning from his day's toil. He saw it shining as a bright point in the grass by the roadside, and, brushing away the earth, extracted the marvelous gem. The mine is at Elandfontein, near Johannesburg, and the discovery was heralded at once throughout the world, attracting at first little credence, because it was difficult to believe that there had been found a stone weighing 3,106 karats, or about one pound, six ounces, avoirdupois, when the largest diamond previously known, the Tiffany, weighed but 95 karats.

Through the influence of General Botha, who has been made premier of the Transvaal, the latter government decided to buy the stone and present it to the King. The government is said to have paid \$50,000 for its royal gift. In order to transport the precious stone to England, a straitjacket was resorted to. The stone itself was rather carelessly wrapped, although securely packed, and sent to a London address by post. Another package, in which there was a large pebble, was tied up with much ceremony and red tape, to say nothing of a profusion of sealing wax and seals. Two detectives were assigned to watch it to its destination, and they nearly died of exhaustion in their attention to duty. They brought the pebble to England safely to England, and did not know until after they had arrived at their destination that they had brought their arrival for nothing, for before their arrival the real stone had been safely received.

Large as is the Cullinan diamond, its dimensions are 4 by 2 1/2 by 1 1/2 inches, being twenty-nine times larger than the famous Koh-i-noor, it is relieved by experts that at one time it was much larger, because there are evidences that very little of its original surface remains. The Koh-i-noor weighed, after its first cutting, 275 karats, but after it had been cut again it weighed only 186-18 karats. Whether the Cullinan stone shall be cut does not appear to be as yet definitely decided. It is probable, however, that this will be its destiny. The alk or British crown, as has been said as not would make a very high pony for the King. The crown, are or weighs over thirty-pounds. Suits men who ask their transparent suits, once hat, may be high up in the in of what this really descending means on the head, or straight last season.

Wanted American Gold

As a countess from a most prominent and aristocratic family, well educated and pretty, my idea was to marry a rich American millionaire, and interest him, as my husband, in helping to free Russia and make it a republic like America.

Daughter of Great Russian Novelist Enamored of This Country, But Still Faithful to Native Land

ing over business affairs: "Excuse me. But if the countess does not accept you, remember I am next."

And Then Another!

The bell of the telephone rang, and I went to answer it. A low voice said to me: "I am Mr. Richman, and I have read your story in the newspapers. I am married, but you know it is nothing to get a divorce here. If you will marry me, I am ready to divorce my wife, and marry you."

I rang off, greatly excited. I thought I should faint. There was only one salvation of this shameful story and that, in my mind, was to commit suicide by shooting a bullet through my brain. I felt all my strength leave me as though my life was at an end. I thought how foolish I had been to die for such a great idea. Oh, my heavens!

The whole world with its money and sufferings became a toy to me. I was tired of such a world. I started to run out from the elegant reception room. After me ran the servants. All my visitors and the servants in the hotel laughed. They began to challenge and taunt me. The Russian consul and ambassador insulted me in Russian: "Ubratitsya k Tobertus. (Go to the devil!)" I hurried as fast as I could upstairs. My strength deserted me. I felt the hands of three American millionaires touch me as they struggled among themselves.

I cried out as loud as I could—

I opened my eyes. I was in my bed in my Russian home, and my three dogs were embracing me. My father laughed and said to me: "Why do you cry out and sprawl with your hands in sleep? The dogs heard it and went to play with you."